THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) The Government had decided in November, 1997 that subsidy on LPG will be reduced in phases to reach the level of 15% of the import parity price by 2000-01. The subsidy will be transferred to the fiscal budget from the year 2002 onwards. Ac-cordingly, Government decided to reduce the subsidy by Rs. 24/cylinder. However, to reduce the burden on customers, the Government reviewed the cylinder compensation scheme for the oil companies and Rs. 10/-cylinder was adjusted towards price increase. The ex-storage point price of LPG packed (Domestic) was increased by Rs. 14/cylinder (Rs. 985.92 per MT) only exclusive of duty, sales tax and other local levies effective midnight of 31st January/lst February, 1999.

Cost of Piped Gas

392. SHRI YERRA NARAYANAS-WAMY: Will the Minister of. PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the cost of supplying piped gas for domestic use;

(b) whether GAIL has made any con-clusive studies in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that the cost of piped gas should work out cheaper from the existing system of cylinders; and

(d) the details of comparative costs of both the systems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The cost for the supply of piped gas varies from region to region depending on availability of natural gas, geographical structures and feasibility of the area.

(b) Yes, Sir. Studies have been con-ducted only in the National Capital Region of Delhi and Mumbai.

(c) This depends upon the geographical features and feasibility report on laying of pipeline network in the town concerned.

(d) No comparative study of the two systems, which are totally different, has been carried out. However, a rebate @ 10% 'has been granted on the price of natural gas supplied under the Delhi city gas distribution pilot project vis-a-vis equivalent quantity of LPG for domestic use.

Filling up ot vacancies in various PSUs

393. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of top vacancies of Chairman / Managing Directors / Director that are still lying vacant in various PSUs/Boards/Committees functioning under the control of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the last two years, till date;

(b) the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for not filling up the posts and by when these are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The details of various vacancies as on date are as under:—

(i) C&MD, Madras Refineries Limited w.e.f. 25.11.98.

(ii) Director (Projects), Gas Authority of India Limited w.e.f. 1.4.96.

(iii) Director (Finance) Bongaigaon Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited w.e.f. 10.7.98.

(iv) Director (Finance), Oil India Li-mited w.e.f. 1.2.98.

(v) Director (E&D), OIL w.e.f. 25.1.99.